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                  *---== ST REPORT ONLINE MAGAZINE ==---*
                     """""""""""""""""""""""""
                  "The Original 16/32bit Online Magazine"
                  _____
                                    from
                            STR Publishing Inc.
                         """"""""""""""""""""
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August 24, 1990   No.6.34
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> 08/24/90: STReportâ ¢ #6.34  The Original 16/32 bit Online Magazine!
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      - The Editor's Desk       - CPU Report         - CPU MacNews
      - MS DOS FOR YOU?          - BOSTON ATARIFEST   - WAACE UPDATES
      - LEXICOR MIFFED!          - F-19 Review!       - STR CONFIDENTIAL

                  * STOCK MARKET TELLS THE REAL TALE!! *
                  * LEXICOR MAKES DEAL WITH ATARI JAPAN! *
                       * PHONEY FAX SOURCE KNOWN! *
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> The Editor's Podiumâ ¢

    School's open, so please drive especially careful in and near school
zones.   This time of year also brings to mind the great shows coming up
this fall. Atari users, all of us, should try to make at least one of
these shows.   The information for the shows is carried in our humble
offering for your convenient reference.

    A special announcement: Beginning next week, STReport will be
uploaded to GEnie on Sunday mornings. We are trying to give the users the
opportunity to obtain our magazine at a convenient time, and still allow
us to bring the very latest news and happenings to your attention as fast
as possible. Also, we are hoping to preserve the originality of our
weekly issues through this change in our release schedule.

    Although the Atari stock is making like a rock swimming, it is not as
serious as it seems.... or is it?   Some have compared the action of the
stock to that of other similar companies.   This is ok, if all you are
interested in is a loose comparison.   The bottom line to the owners of
Atari stock and the owners of Atari computers is what the stock is going
to do in the next few weeks. Also, many prospective NEW buyers of Atari
computers are sure to be paying attention to the stock and allowing its
behavior to weigh heavily on their decision to purchase the equipment or
not.   In any case, life goes on and we who already own the hardware can
look at the "leaders" at Atari and quietly murmur 'so, you thought you
knew what you were doing?'

    WE'll be here when the smoke clears, but will the guys who made all
the noises in Sunnyvale for the last three years?   The incessant Bad
mouthing, accusing, threatening, enjoying vendettas etc... yessir, they've
put on quite show. The party's over now though... Elie is here and he is
quietly taking notes.....

                                    Ralph....

        Hey Antonio, how yer Aircraft Carrier?? Fix yer rudder yet??

    ****

    NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

                        FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

        COMPUSERVE WILL PRESENT $15.00 WORTH OF COMPLIMENTARY ONLINE TIME

                            to the Readers of;

                        STREPORT ONLINE MAGAZINE
                        """"""""""""""""""""""""
                    "The Original 16/32bit Online Magazine"

> CPU REPORTâ ¢
  =========

  Issue # 80
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by Michael Arthur

Remember When....
        In February 1979, Intel introduced the 8088 microprocessor, which
had an 8-bit internal bus architecture, but was considered a 16-bit chip
because of its 16-bit external bus?

        Or how, after refusing to use Zilog's Z-80 microprocessor because
Zilog was owned by a competitor, IBM introduced the 8088-based IBM PC in
August 1981?

CPU MacNewsâ ¢   **** COVERAGE OF THE MACWORLD EXPO TRADE SHOW ****
===========

                    THE BEST OF TIMES, THE WORST OF TIMES
                       MACWORLD EXPO/BOSTON 1990

        The recent MacWorld Expo/Boston 1990 was a study in contrasts. This
was one of the largest MacWorld Expos ever, in terms of both product
announcements, and the number of Macintosh developers/vendors found at the
show. This was also the first MacWorld Expo in which the general public
could attend all four days of the show. In previous MacWorld Expos, the
show's first day (called Industry Day) was closed to the general public,
so the computer industry press and "invited guests" could have unhindered
access to the showroom floor.

Despite all this, attendance at this year's show was only marginally higher than last August's Expo. While over 60,000 people attended the April 1990 MacWorld Expo, only 48,000 attended MacWorld Expo/Boston.

Also, while the MacWorld Expo is sponsored by MacWorld Magazine, Mitch Hall Associates (who manages the MacWorld Expos) stirred up considerable controversy by its treatment of members of the computer press who used press passes.

In previous MacWorld Expos (like in most industry trade shows), some people who weren't members of the press had tried to get press passes for the Expo by claiming to be journalists. In order to stop this, Mitch Hall Associates first tried to exclude all freelance writers (read: those who weren't part of the staff of any large Macintosh publication) from getting press passes. After vehement protests from many computer industry analysts and writers, this policy was dropped. For the MacWorld Expo, press passes were only given to members of the Computer Press Association. The CPA is an industry group that represents many computer industry writers and journalists.

At the MacWorld Expo, all press passes were checked at the entrances using ultraviolet light. Legitimate press passes would glow when exposed, while counterfeits would not. However, Mitch Hall Associates did not reveal how many (if any) counterfeits were ever found. Curiously, several unofficial press ribbons were seen at MacWorld Expo, with statements like "Illegitimate PRESS Corp.". In fact, Laurie McLean (head of the McLean Public Relations Firm) was passing out ribbons labeled, "rePRESSed"....

Despite the controversy over press passes, MacWorld Expo/Boston was a goldmine for industry news, being the scene of numerous product announcements. Among the products introduced were Adobe Illustrator 3.0, Version 2.1 of the 4th Dimension SQL database, Adobe Type Manager 2.0, a color desktop scanner marketed by Animus Inc., and Spinnaker Software's Plus (a Hypercard clone). Other products being announced were:

-   Version 2.5 of the Fastback II hard disk backup program. Made by Fifth Generation Systems (maker of Suitcase II and Pyro!), Version 2.5 provides an improved user interface, and File Director, a new file management utility.

-   Ashton Tate's FullWrite Professional 1.5. This update provides sophisticated page layout features, expanded support for file conversion, and improved Online Help. Ashton Tate also provides a series of guides to help users in learning and using the program. Cost: $395.00....

-   Heizer Software's ConvertIt! . This series of utilities translates Hypercard stacks into files readable by ToolBook, a Hypercard clone available for Microsoft Windows 3.0. A Macintosh program first converts Hypercard files into HIFF (Hypermedia Interchange File Format) files. One then uses a DOS Utility to convert the HIFF file into ToolBook's file format. ConvertIt! will be available in October 1990. Cost: $200.00....

-   The Ultimate Portable for the Mac. Made by Computer Friends Inc., this consists of an Atari Portfolio, the Atari Serial Interface, a cable for connecting the Portfolio to a Macintosh, and the Message Mover utility. With this program, one can perform file transfer operations between a Portfolio and a Macin-

tosh, or use a modem to call Bbss and Online Services with a
Portfolio. Cost: $600.00 with a Portfolio.
Computer Friends also sells a $250.00 package, which allows
current Portfolio users to interface their "ultimate portables"
with Macs....

- PixelPaint Professional Version 2.0. Made by SuperMac Technol-
  ogy, this release features a completely redesigned interface that
  (among other things) uses floating color palettes and "pressure--
  sensitive" drawing tools. PixelPaint Professional 2.0 also has a
  color gradient editor, allows users to work with multiple pic-
  tures, and can move/change shapes or text in a picture. Cost:
  $800.00, but only $125 for upgrading from PixelPaint Professional
  1.0.

- Version 2.0 of the DiskLock file protection utility.   Also made
  by Fifth Generation Systems, this product will automatically lock
  (or write-protect) files after a system crash, and supports DES,
  a Data Encryption Standard developed by the US Government.

- Ashton Tate's dBASE IV Runtime Plus.   This product allows users
  to use, create, or modify programs made using the dBASE IV lan-
  guage. It is compatible with dBASE IV Version 1.1 for DOS,
  meaning that programs made using the dBASE IV Runtime can be used
  by DOS systems unchanged.   However, since dBASE IV 1.1 (which
  began shipping for the PC last week) still has several bugs in
  it, the complete dBASE IV software won't be available for Macin-
  tosh or Unix systems for at least another year....

    Networking products were plentiful at Macworld/Boston 1990. Novell
introduced Version 2.0 of their Netware for the Mac. Netware is a "System
Fault Tolerant" network operating system that is the dominant LAN standard
in the IBM industry. This release allows Macs to be used as file servers
and system administrators in a LAN Network, as well as providing improved
error protection. Oracle also announced their new Oracle Database Server
for Macintosh. This SQL Relational database server lets Macintoshes be
used as database servers for Macintosh-only LANs, as well as using Macs to
access databases on the 80 types of microcomputer, mainframe, and
minicomputer systems for which Oracle software is available.

    One notable no-show at this Macworld Expo was Jasmine Inc.   This
company was one of the most popular Macintosh hard drive vendors, until
mismanagement, lawsuits with its hard disk suppliers, and power struggles
among its top management drove it into Chapter 11 bankruptcy in Early
1990. Jasmine is now a division of Chess S.A., a French maker of Mac
peripherals.   Jasmine did not have a booth at MacWorld Expo, but did
announce a new line of hard disk drives during the show....

    Several Apple officials were among the featured speakers at the
show.   Apple CEO John Sculley gave the keynote address, while Jean-Louis
Gassee gave his last speech as outgoing President of Apple USA. Notably,
Ian Diery (President of Apple Pacific) gave a seminar in which he
emphasized that products must be "positioned differently, marketed
differently, and supported differently throughout the world", according to
the societies found in the countries that they are targeted towards.

    Apple had experienced tremendous problems in this regard in Japan,
where mismanagement, lack of R&D efforts to "localize" products for the

Japanese marketplace, and efforts to run Apple Japan "as a US company"
almost ruined the Macintosh in Japan. However, Apple Japan has now made
the Macintosh one of the most popular computers in Japan, with companies
like Microsoft writing Japanese versions of their software. Diery also
stressed that Apple has become a truly international firm, and noted that
"with computer sales rising faster internationally than within the US,
that is extremely important for (Apple's) long term growth."

> CPU STATUS REPORTâ ¢   >>> LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS <<<
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- Ithaca, NY   NEW STUDY SHOWS HOW TO REDUCE EYESTRAIN FROM MONITORS

     Cornell University has completed a new study into reducing eyestrain
among VDT (video display terminal) users.   It compared the reactions of
computer users working under indirect fluorescent lighting (or uplighting)
to those working under conventional "overhead" (or parabolic) fluorescent
lighting.

     The study found that 25 percent of the computer users working under
"overhead" lighting lost more than 15 minutes a day because of trouble
focusing their eyes. In contrast, only 1 percent of those working under
indirect "uplighting" had similar eyestrain difficulties. The Cornell
study also found that 71 percent of the users working under indirect
lighting preferred it, while 74 percent of those using "overhead" lighting
liked the indirect lighting better....

     "Uplighting" consists of directing the light of lensed fluorescent
lights towards the ceiling. It is now being used by AT&T, IBM, and other
companies for employees that use computers. The most significant thing
about the Cornell study is that it shows the ineffectiveness of "overhead"
lighting....

- Glenview, IL   DEFENSE DEPARTMENT FUNDS ZENITH'S HDTV RESEARCH

     The US Department of Defense has announced that DARPA (its advanced
research and development division) will be co-funding segments of Zenith's
HDTV (High Definition Television) research pertaining to its FTM (flat
tension mask) color display technology.

     FTM displays are extremely rugged, glare-free, and renowned for
their effectiveness in high resolution displays. Zenith is now working to
develop new manufacturing processes to produce large-screen FTM displays,
which DARPA is interested in for military workstation displays. Worth
over $1 million dollars, the joint DARPA/Zenith effort could revolutionize
the manufacture of color monitors. Interestingly enough, the effort funds
an essential part of Zenith's HDTV Research....

     Zenith, the last remaining independent US TV maker, sold its

personal computer division to Groupe Bull of France, in order to concentrate on the HDTV Field. The market for High Definition Television technology is expected to blossom in the 1990s, and to become essential for many 21st Century technologies. Several Japanese and European companies have made strides in the field, but the DOD chose to work with Zenith because of national security interests. Meaning that having US companies in the HDTV field will be vital to having a steady supply of technology for US military equipment....

- Hayward, CA   SECURITY FIRM DARES CRACKERS TO "BEAT" THEIR SYSTEM

     Leemah DataCom Security Corp., which develops personal computer security systems, has issued a challenge to all computer "crackers" to successfully "beat" its TraqNet security system. Leemah is providing the password for accessing its computer system, and is giving "contestants" 2 weeks to try to crack the 4 levels of security that are protecting a Secret Message hidden in its computer system. The first person to successfully access the Secret Message will win a vacation for two to Tahiti or St. Moritz, Switzerland....

     This is being done to prove that security systems (like TraqNet) can be "invulnerable" to unauthorized intruders. Leemah offered a similar challenge last year, and had 7,476 unsuccessful attempts. Many of the "contestants" (some of whom thought Leemah was being arrogant and overconfident) complained that Leemah won last year's contest because it had only set up ONE phone line for handling the thousands of calls made to the system. This year, Leemah is adding 5 extra lines to the computer system, so that it can take ALL incoming attempts to break into its system. Leemah believes that the odds of defeating the various levels of security protecting the Secret Message are 1 in 72 quadrillion....

     Interestingly enough, this contest is at odds with industry efforts to discourage computer cracking, with some computer Hackers saying that Leemah is advocating the activities of computer Crackers. However, Leemah maintains that this contest will show that much can be done to defeat computer cracking activities....

- West Chester, PA   COMMODORE PROFITS DROP AS AMIGA SALES CLIMB UP

     Commodore International has reported a loss of $3.5 million in their fourth quarter, on revenues of $198 million. This loss was attributed to expenses related to the recent $20 million dollar Amiga ad campaign that Commodore launched. But interestingly, Commodore reported earnings of $3.5 million on revenues of $887 million. Also, Amiga computer sales rose by 40 percent in the fourth quarter, while sales of the C-64 and Commodore's line of PC Clones dropped considerably....

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Dateline: Fairfax Ca. 8-18-90

    LEXICOR software sets date for WORLD WIDE release of it's forth coming
PHASE-4 Desktop Video graphics software.

    Recently concluded contract negotiations with Rio Datel USA, Condor
Computers of England and ATARI Japan resulted in a release date for
PHASE-4 of NOVEMBER 1st, 1990. While LEXICOR's decision to release it's
products through exclusive distributors has delayed release 60 days, the
users are ensured faster service and more support through these well known
and long established distributors.

    The most recent development in PHASE-4 distribution was an interna-
tional FAX request from Tony Toki president of ATARI Japan Corp. for
PHASE-4 bundling with ATARI machines for Japanese marketing in the ISAC
1024X768 environment.

    The ISAC produces a "SUPER HIGH RES" screen using a multi sync monit-
or. PRISM-PAINT 1024 programs designed for LEXICOR's own color boards
produce 49,152 colors on the screen at the same time when used with IMAGE
systems color board. This is the least expensive way to "full color
graphics atari".

    Currently available directly from LEXICOR at $775.00 + $5.25 for ship-
ping and handling and available through RIO DATEL after November 1st,
1990. (includes Hardware and software).

The ISAC requires both an Atari MEGA ST and TOS 1.4 to use PRISM
COLOR-1024.

                    ON A SAD NOTE.....

    Lexicor wishes to apologize to all those ATARIANS who were looking
forward to seeing the new PHASE-4 graphic arts applications and hard ware
scheduled for release NOV. 1st 1990 through Rio Datel in the USA and
Condor Computers in Europe.

    LEXICOR had accepted an invitation to present a two day work seminar
featuring Desktop video and animations at the GLENDALE SHOW.

    The presentation was to show for the first time 24-Bit true color on
standard un-modified Atari computers, with demonstrations and visitor use
of LEXICOR applications on the New TT030/8 and ISAC/Mega computers. The
seminar was intended to teach and inform the user with a published han-
dout which included many helpful tricks of the trade and marketing hints
to aspiring computer artist.

    Demonstrations of photo realistic rendering and motion control rival-

ing the most expensive high end systems was planned along with compari-
sons of past atari works and computer animation show.

     Candidly speaking, LEXICOR can not attend the GLENDALE show and make
the time and manpower commitment required to provide a professional
seminar on simply a "standby speaker basis", which was presented to
LEXICOR by GLENDALE show representative J.K. Tarpinian after LEXICOR had
accepted and made commitments based on an EARLIER invitation, with no
strings attached, by J. Nagy on behalf of Glendale. Lexicor was to be
Guest speakers and fully demonstrate our complete line of fine new
products for the Atari computers.

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> The FLIP SIDE STR Featureâ ¢   A different view point....
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                  A LITTLE OF THIS, A LITTLE OF THAT
                  ==================================

by Michael Lee

You're going to be seeing some minor changes in my column in the next few
weeks as I play with different formats to see which one is the easiest
for our readers to read.   This week, to save space, I've stripped the
headers from the messages and have just put the senders name at the end
of each post. Let me know what you think of this format.

This week's column consists of a few odds and ends posts that I felt
contained general information that would be of interest to most of our
readers.

"What exactly is the difference, if any, between a 3 1/2" and 5 1/4" hard
disk drive...." - Jason Saffer

"The laws of physics make a well designed 3 1/2" drive quieter, faster,
and more reliable than a similar size 5 1/4" mechanism. There is less
mass to move for the spindle motor and the stepper has less travel and
requires less speed to achieve the same step rate. This results in lower
power motors which are inherently quieter. Less power means less heat
which should result in longer life."

"Nearly all drive manufacturers have migrated towards 3 1/2" mechanisms
and they will soon replace the 5 1/2" mechanism for annual drive volume.
(If they haven't already). The newest technologies also are put into 3
1/2" mechanisms.   Usually a comparable 5 1/4" mech will be a year or two
older in design."

"BTW Most drive manufacturers have a 2 1/2" mech design program in place
today." - Tom at ICD, Inc.

      (From Genie)

"....I found out two things, one is that the CDAR504 (Ed's Note: Atari's
CD Rom player) is really a CHINON DC431. I also found out that the SLM804
is really an Office Automations Systems Inc. printer - the Laserpro 5308.
So if you need tech specs, toner, drums, you now have an alternative
source."

"The SLM804 uses the TEC LB1301 write white engine, NOT the Ricoh engine.

You can interchange the toner/drum with the Oaysis LaserPro series
without problem and usually at noticeable savings I might add." Toad
Computer

      (From Genie)

"There's a rumor of a new upgrade from ICD that makes their host adaptor
compatible with both Talon's SuperCharger and fixes the STe hard disk
problem." - from Gregg Anderson

"We just added some capacitors to smooth out noise on the DMA bus that
was a real problem on the STE. That fixed 99% of our STE problems and
doesn't cause any problems on other computers (which is always a danger).
The other 1% which is not fixed is the mysterious data shifting that we
have seen only once in our office. I would guess that is caused by
defective DMA chips and is not very common." - Tom at ICD

"I phoned my contact in Germany today, and he says that the release
version of Tempus Word is promised in September." - Norm Weinress

(Ed's Note: Tempus is one of the fastest editors available for the ST. It
is assumed that a word processor from the same company would be fast and
full featured.)

      (From Genie)

There is an ad from Beswick Engineering in the Computer Shopper. This is
for an 'Inkjet Reinker Kit' and it includes equipment, instructions, and
60 ml of black ink for HP Deskjet family. The ad also mentions bulk ink
both in black and colors. "Prepay $29.00 to:"

      Beswick Engineering
      Box 602

Ipswich, MA 01938
        800-354-5014.

In the same issue, a simple classified ad mentions cartridge re-inking.
$7 per cartridge, and they pay the shipping with an order of more than
one.

        Sensor Based Systems
        17010 NE 190th
        Woodinville, WA 98072
        206 827-8794

Until next week.....

        _____

> Stock Market ~ STReport Onlineâ ¢   Computer Stocks Zapped by Oil Crisis
  ==============================

                                        THE TICKERTAPE
                                        ==============

Week I
------

by Michael Arthur

    The price of Atari stock stayed the same price on Monday, Tuesday, and
Wednesday.   It went down by 1/8 of a point on Thursday, and was down
another 1/8 of a point on Friday. Finishing up the week at 4 3/4 points,
Atari stock had gone down 1/4 of a point since Friday, August 3rd.

        Interestingly enough, it seems that Atari and Commodore fared the
best on this week. The stock selloff from the Iraq/Kuwait Crisis, at this
time, affected major computer stocks the worst.

    Apple Stock was down 2 1/2 points from Friday, August 3, 1990.
        Commodore Stock was down 1/8 of a point from 8/03/90.
            IBM Stock was down 6 1/8 points from 8/03/90.

        Stock Report for Week of 8/06/90 to 8/10/90

| STock | Monday | | Tuesday | | Wednesday | | Thursday | | Friday | |
Reprt	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.
Atari	5	----	5	----	5	----	4 7/8	-1/8	4 3/4	- 1/8
									44,500 Sls	

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
CBM	6 1/8	- 1/4	5 7/8	- 1/4	6 3/8	+1/2	6 5/8	+1/4	6 1/2	-1/8
									68,500 Sls	
Apple	39 1/2	-1 3/4	39 1/2	----	40 1/8	+5/8	39 1/2	-5/8	38 3/4	- 3/4
	2,401,500 Sls								917,000 Sls	
IBM	103 7/8	-4 1/4	103	- 7/8	103 1/8	+1/8	103 1/4		102	- 1 1/4
	3,549,200 Sls							+1/8	1,448,500 Sls	

'Sls' refers to the # of stock shares that were traded that day.
'CBM' refers to Commodore Corporation.
'----' means that the stock's price did not change for the day.

THE TICKERTAPE - Week II   And the Band Marches On....
----

by Michael Arthur

     On Monday, Atari stock went up 1/4 of a point, and dropped 1/8 of a
point on Tuesday. It went down by 1/8 of a point on Wednesday, and stayed
the same price on Thursday. The price of Atari stock went down 1/2 of a
point on Friday.   Finishing up the week at 4 1/4 points, Atari stock has
gone down 5/8 of a point since August 10, 1990.

     This week, most computer stocks fell sharply in price, as worries
over the price of oil caused stockholders to turn towards other types of
investments (gold, platinum, etc.). As in last week, Apple stock fared
the worst, but Atari stock reached a 52-week low, at 4 1/4 and the end
does not appear to be in sight.

     Apple Stock was down 2 1/4 points from Friday, August 10, 1990.
          Commodore Stock was down 1/2 of a point from 8/10/90.
             IBM Stock was down 5/8 of a point from 8/10/90.

          Stock Report for Week of 8/13/90 to 8/17/90

STock	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
Reprt	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.
Atari	5	+ 1/4	4 7/8	-1/8	4 3/4	-1/8	4 3/4	----	4 1/4	- 1/2
									65,500 Sls	
CBM	6 1/2	----	6 3/8	-1/8	6 3/8	----	6	- 3/8	6	- 3/8
									96,500 Sls	
Apple	39 7/8	+1 1/8	39 3/4	-1/8	39 1/4		38 1/2	-3/4	36 1/2	- 2
						-1/2			2,197,400 Sls	
IBM	103 3/4	+1 3/4	104 3/8		105	+ 5/8	103 3/4		101 3/8	-2 3/8
				+5/8				-1 1/4	2,640,600 Sls	

'Sls' refers to the # of stock shares that were traded that day.
        'CBM' refers to Commodore Corporation.
         '----' means that the stock's price did not change for the day.

        Curiously, Atari lost 15 percent of its stock's value over this two
week period. Here is a list of computer stock price changes over the
reported two-week period:

        Atari: Down 0.75 (US$)   IBM: Down 6.75 (US$)
        Apple: Down 4.75 (US$)   Commodore: Down 0.37 (US$)

        _____

> F-19!! STR Reviewâ ¢   "The top secret F-117A was actually..."
  ==================

                        F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER
                               from
                      MicroProse Software, Inc.

by Paul Varn

This recent addition to the air combat simulation game market was
anticipated with a great deal of enthusiasm by the ST computer world of
air battle players since its successful introduction to   the IBM world.
The version I have purchased was the one for the ST in the UK imported to
the US. The timing is a little curious as the formal US version is due
to be released the end of August '90 and this import arrived here only a
few weeks earlier.   The   information I have read is that the European
import version will not differ from the US version except for some small
packaging details and registration card. It is the most costly of the
simulations to date for the ST and the most elaborate. Truly a no-holds-
barred effort to produce a contemporary and realistic simulation (really
hard to call this one a "game" anymore) that provides exhaustive mission
possibilities, complex graphics, uncompromising sound, and a manual that
can be used as a reference of modern warfare and rival illustrated infor-
mation books in your library.

THE GAME:

    Research in 1989 on the possible performance, shape, and mission of a
US   stealth fighter, and speculation as to it's name resulted in the
programming of F-19. The top secret F-117A was actually deployed in 1983
but openly disclosed only this year.   Both shapes (the one based on

guesses and the real F-117A) are included in the simulation but are iden-
tical in performance.

    You can select between two types of missions; air or ground strike,
or fly the same missions in "training" mode where being   shot down or
failing a mission won't affect your permanent pilot log. There are always
primary and secondary targets. Note here that air attack missions often
include a ground mission which is most likely reconaissance photography.
F-19 has four choices for areas of the real world in which to battle:
Central Europe, North Cape of Arctic Ocean (Finland, Sweden, Norway, and
USSR), Persian Gulf, and Libya.   The terrain image detail is astounding
and geographically accurate.

    You can choose between four levels of enemy competence (really dumb
to nearly unbeatable) and four levels of flight characteristic difficulty
(no crashes and ground proximity protection to realistic performance).
Choosing the most difficult of all the options (real missions, elite
enemy, and real landings) yield the highest point scores upon completing
the mission. Successful completion must always include a safe landing.

    Upon embarking on a mission (assisted by CRT displayed way points and
maps) you will find yourself confronted by a vast array of enemy ground,
air, and sea defenses armed with an equally daunting stockpile of mar-
ginal and sophisticated weaponry. To   counter, you have no less than 17
types of weapons to choose from and additionally, external fuel, 135mm
camera, and the ability to air drop supply and equipment packages.

    After completing a mission, a detailed graphic debriefing pictorial of
your successes or mistakes along with accumulated score is presented.
Also, an entertaining animated bar scene with your other flying buddys
which changes depending on the effectiveness of your completed mission.
Ranking and medals are included.   If you ditch your plane and eject,
there's an excellent animation of a rescue helicopter.

PACKAGING:

    You get four, three-color glossy maps, a keyboard overlay, (very
similar to Red Storm Rising) manual, computer specific technical
supplement, registration card, and three disks. Hard disk installation is
not available on this version and has copy protection on all three disks
as well as picture identification from the manual. When you format a
standard disk from the desktop, you create a fourth disk which is used
for pilot records. This file is hidden on the disk and not recognized by
TOS. There cannot be enough said about the manual. It is very complete
(192 pages) with full page art, crystal clear examples of game images,
well explained game play, and extensive friend/foe, craft/weapon data.
Contents table and elaborate index are accurate and invaluably useful.
The technical supplement omits Cntrl-N to toggle night flying in training
mode, and specifies two controls: (Cntrl-Q, and Cntrl-B that don't work).
Another minor error specifies lines when it should be boxes describing
EMV symbols.   The fact that it alone is 19 pages suggests the
comprehensiveness of the detail involved.

WHAT I LIKE:

    Unparalleled detail and unique external views are a standout miles
above any ST simulation I've seen (I've played them all). Screen scrolling
is acceptable considering the detail and does not in any way hamper the
smoothness of play. It's really fun to sight see! Clouds, along with
fire and smoke from successful strikes are handled in a way that is

unique, adding a lot of realism and long term interest factors to the
game. At night, real star formations and a beautiful moon fill the sky
except where hidden by clouds (real nice!). The sound is synthesized
except for the digital opening theme. Nothing lackluster here! The sound
of your missile launch is wonderful. Power and wind sound change to
reflect the changing flight dynamics of your plane. There are friendly
aircraft of all kinds (even commercial) around most of the time. Carrier
launch and landing are authentic and exciting. Flight controls can be
Keys, mouse, or joystick with three selectable levels of sensitivity. I
enjoy the joystick play so much I haven't tried the others.

STEALTH FIGHTER?

    If you're after rich dogfighting play, this may not be the one for
you. The combination necessary to provide low profile and speed to radars
and visual sighting does not make this a great dogfighting machine. These
same attributes though can bring you nose to tail against the best of the
dogfighting Migs without them knowing you're there. Once your formidable
and varied weapons are brought to bear, it won't matter if a 550 knot
plane is up against a 750 knot afterburner. A full set of modern coun-
ter-measure gizmos help to further even the odds.

PROBLEMS:

    OK, in a game this complex what are the bugs? Unfortunately, there
are a couple semi-serious ones. There is an unpredictable 180 degree flip
that leaves you instantly flying inverted. Night flying can complicate
the problem by making it more difficult to recognize the problem and
correct it by rolling upright again. When this happens at altitude under
200 feet, avoiding collision is even more difficult. A couple of players
have reported mountains suddenly appearing out of the ocean causing a
collision although I haven't run into this one yet (North Cape area) in
many hours of play. The copy protection may render a whole disk or
portions of data to be unreadable to the program and the game will lock
up with a scrambled screen and error codes displayed. Replacing a disk
with a new one solved one such problem for me. Although the documentation
hints otherwise, crashes with the ground in training mode will "KIA" your
pilot log forcing you to start again with another pilot. If you're
unsure of your skill, select "no crash or "easy landing". MicroProse is
looking into these problems and will no doubt come up with solutions. I
still consider the game playable and I'm willing to tolerate them until
they come up with some solution. If you want a bug free game, I don't
know how long you'll have to wait. The chance to experience a hallmark
computer simulation that can fully entertain even critical simulation
enthusiasts might be worth jumping in early. I don't regret the purchase
feeling that the obvious effort in this project and the good reputation
of MicroProse will eventually produce a more concrete product. A
conspicuous label on the box assures buyers of STE compatibility.

    I consider myself a critical though avid simulation flier. I own
Gunship, (another fine Microprose game) F16 Combat Simulator, Falcon,
Battlehawks 1942, Flight Simulator II, Jet, and Harrier Combat Simulator.
I also admit to owning F15 Strike Eagle (another MicroProse product).
Don't judge F-19 using Strike Eagle though. There's no comparison whate-
ver. I consider this game in a world of it's own. It breaks new ground
in game programming in the way Falcon did when it was new.

    My aim in posting this review is to aid prospective buyers in purchase
decisions about expensive and complex software where a five minute tryout
in the store comes far short of providing detail necessary to feel con-

fident in your interest and entertainment value.

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> ATARI STOCK WOW! STR PROBEâ ¢   The Atari Saga   ...continues
  ==========================

 ->aka: "The Rude Awakening"

                    WHY THE RABID DECLINE OF ATARI'S STOCK
                    ======================================

                        :QUESTION OF THE DECADE:

    How, can a company release such a tremdously great and successful
    machine as the ST and few years later be considered the "joke" of the
    decade in the computer industry?

                               :ANSWER:

    This is a question only Sam Tramiel can answer, since he is "the man"
responsible for the success or failure of Atari.

                    :MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION OF THE DECADE:

    What do you consider to be the primary cause of the tragic decline in
    the value of Atari and its stock?

                        :MULTIPLE CHOICE ANSWER:
                        ----
        a - The deadly lack of a solid dealer network.
        b - Particularly poor dealer support.
        c - Little or no National sales efforts.
        d - The STe problem.
        e - The lack of advertising.
        f - The bad attitude of certain of Atari's representatives.
        g - The reputation Atari has built in the industry.
        h - A totally inept corporate leadership.
        i - Corporate leaders with inappropriate priorities.
        j - Outrageously high Jr. executive turnover
        k - ALL of the above.

The real   answer has   been known   by many of the industry analysts for
quite some time. Many have   expressed: "you cannot   place this   type of
operation into   the hands   of those who are strict idealists and expect it
to survive.. let alone be a success."

    While the Tramiel sons may have the 'best of educations' they certain-
ly have   shown that "experts in the computer business they are not."   From
the time they assumed relative freehanded control of Atari, there has been
a foreboding   attitude exhibited   by them.   Unfortunately, at the time the
shining light of the ST and its successors the Mega 2 and   4 were   a posi-
tive distraction for what was slowly developing.

    For the   last 36   months, there   has been   a steady   procession of the
brightest software and hardware developers away   from the   Atari ST arena.
Granted,   the   same   thing   is   happening   in the other related arenas but
nowhere near the scale it is happening in the Atari arena. Why? Although
it would   be nice to give a straight forward, easy answer, there really is
none. Except perhaps, to reflect   on the   treatment both   developers and
dealers have received over the past three years.   In no other platform has
the dealer and the developer both been horsed around as much as   they have
in the   Atari arena.   The   developers and dealers are like the oil fields
and refineries are to the auto makers. Without the developers and dealers
Atari computers will have nothing to run.

    Sure, there are those who say well, there are six thousand programs to
use already in the ST arena. All this is well and good, but   they are all
dated and   fast becoming   examples of   how programs   "used to be written".
For Atari computers to gain a decisive leading   edge, programming   for the
Atari computers must be   on the   cutting edge of the future.   There is no
compromise here that is the way it is. Once in this   position, Atari will
enjoy the sales its excellent hardware should justifiably generate.

    There   is   no   question,   that   Atari's   hardware (except   for   the
STe..eeek!) has an excellent track record.   Now   however, with   the stock
exchange going   nuts.   Atari's task   has not   been made any easier but it
still can be done. The hardware speaks for itself. ITS GOOD STUFF.   The
company must   put away   the negative image it has established of being run
by three vindictive, uncaring young men   who have   no idea   what the real
world is   all about.   There   are those   of us who know or, at least would
like to believe that such is not the case, but when the bottom line   is as
plain as the value of the stock, there is little argument left.

    On the   bright side,   there will   be sweeping changes made both in or-
ganization and   personnel and   most should   have occurred   before Oct. 01,
1990.

_____

> Not That Bad.. STR Mail Callâ ¢   Reader opinions reflected....
  ==============================

22472 S17/Community Square
23-Aug-90 23:32:45
Sb: #22463-Atari Profit/Loss
Fm: TIM REYES 73377,220
To: Michael Arthur @ STR/CPU 72510,672

     It doesn't appear that Atari has driven itself to Chapter 11. Teh
quarterly report apparently didn't help its stock's value and so also the
middle east crisis. The latter has damaged all high tech stocks. Although
they lost alot in the Federate Group debacle and have had no design for
pushing their pc computer further, it seems to me that it would take more
to push it off the deep end. Furthermore, there are enough moles around so
that we would know of something so wrong and urgent.

     My own feeling is that the Tramiel family is setting up the corpora-
tion for putting it up for sale. For example putting the new fellow from
Atari France   in charge of the U.S., Canada and out of the Tramiel sons
hands, might be one indication of their preparation. Also the development
of the Atari TT with its unix (& TOS) capability, once on the market,
might make the corporation much more marketable. The Tramiel sons could
take there millions and easily start again, each in their own directions
perhaps.

     If it goes up for sale, so to speak, from watching the stock of other
bought out corporations in the past decade, it would seem to me that Atari
stock would easily double it present value. And I agree that the upcoming
holiday buying season and the imminent release of the TT will push the
price up considerably.

                                   Tim Reyes

_____

> MS DOS?? STR Featureâ ¢   An honest look by an ST'er
  ====================

                                  So, What's the Big Deal?
                                   =======================

by Peter T. Szymonik

     Last month I faced a crisis. The Mega 4 was fine, but I couldn't use
it! As her semester was drawing to a close, my fiancee confiscated the
machine to finish her research papers. It was almost too much to bear.

I couldn't log onto to networks, I couldn't write letters ... NO
SPECTRE GCR!! The computer had become part of my daily routine, everyday
for years I switched on the ST to check mail, read news, and to post
messages.   But the sacrifice was necessary, so I supplied the coffee and
encouragement while she typed. The story continues....

    Last year I was wandering around New York City doing freelance work
while trying to decide what to do with my life. I landed a couple of jobs
that required Mac knowledge and read through some Mac books and within a
week I became a Mac "power user."

    The work was nice, the pay ok, but New York City ... , well let's
just say that its hardly what I would call an ideal place to live and
work.   I soon realized that most New Yorkers spend their lives trying to
get out of New York City, so I decided to escape while I still could and
headed back for Connecticut.

    In Connecticut I landed computer jobs working for a non-profit
company that helps American Indians, a law firms and also for ESPN (what a
great place to work!) It became obvious that my Mac knowledge was in
demand, but that it wouldn't be enough to keep me occupied full time in
the corporate world. Kicking and screaming all the way, I started to
learn MS-DOS. I know you're all in shock. I'll give you a few minutes.

    Strapping myself behind a Dell '286, within a few days I became part
of the millions of lost souls who use this brain dead ten-year old,
operating system. The situation was grim my friends, every day I dove
deeper and deeper into the dark world of MS-DOS. I was lost, I was weak,
then it happened. April 21st ... a Saturday ... at 11:23pm ...   I saw
the ad and I snapped, I grabbed the Visa card and did it. In a few
minutes it was all over, I had bought Northgate Slimline '386. (Oh the
shame!) My fate was sealed. The story you are about to read is true...

    This article is about the world of MS-DOS and my experiences on the
other side of the fence. ST owners are forced to listen to all the
MS-DOS people telling us how great MS-DOS is and what we're missing. We
hear about '386 systems running at a blazing 20Mhz or more, fantastic
screen resolutions that put the ST monitor to shame, and software that
appears to be growing on trees. Well, I've been in the MS-DOS world for
six months now and I'd like to give you a taste of what it's really like.
This not to knock MS-DOS machines or to start a "my machine is better
than your machine" argument, I did shell out over $3,500 on one of the
suckers after all. This is simply to show that even the MS-DOS world is
hardly the computer users paradise everyone makes it out to be.

    Lots of homework has to done before buying an MS-DOS machine without
getting burned in the process. Armed with the latest issues of Computer
Shopper, PC Magazine, and PC World, I started to shop for my dream system.

    Lesson Number One: forget the prices splattered all over the flashy
multi-colored ads. By the time a decent system is put together the final
price can easily be TWICE what ad says. Watch the small print and there
is plenty of it. Choices in the ST world are simple. Pick a machine with
the amount of memory you want or can afford, pick a color or monochrome
monitor, buy a hard drive, and your off and running.   Not so in the
MS-DOS world. First you need to pick the type of processor you want to
your system to run; 286? 386SX? 386? 486? PC magazines say the 286 is a

dead end, or is it? Recent articles tell us that the latest crop of high
speed 286 chips can outperform 386 chips. How about a 386SX? Everyone is
pushing it as a low cost alternative to the 386, but is buying a crippled
chip a smart move? Is a 486 worth the extra money? Articles are already
showing up saying the 386 may be an orphan.

     Let's move on, pick the amount of memory you want, sorry, not that
simple. When buying memory for an MS-DOS machine remember to consider
such things as extended and expanded memory. Wait, before we go on, what
speed chips do you want? Do you want SIMMS or have them on the mother-
board? There is also carded memory if you'd prefer. Some applications are
severe memory hogs, but remember that no matter how much memory the system
has, the 640K DOS limit is always there starting you in the face!

     Well, lets skip that, what's next? Which operating system do we
chose, MS-DOS 3.3 or 4.01? OS/2 is around the corner, Windows 3.0 is out.
Be aware that some OS systems need LOTS of memory.   With MS- DOS 4.01
you'll find some applications that just won't run because of the memory
4.01 requires.   On the other hand some new memory- hungry applications
require MS-DOS 4.01! Don't forget about extended memory (or is it ex-
panded memory?) You can also throw some stuff into high memory, not the
640K high memory, the other high memory.   Multitasking? That requires
Desqview 386 or Windows 3.0 and lots of memory. Windows and OS/2 also
require lots of memory, and applications designed to use them.

     Confused yet? Well, let's pick a monitor, that should be easy.   VGA
is the one to have, right? or is it Super VGA?? What's that? BOTH 800x600
and 1024x768 are Super VGA? What's this 8514/A everyone is talking about?
What do you mean I have to be careful? If my monitor isn't standard, no
software will take full advantage of it...   What is the standard? You
don't know ...   well ok, I'll go with Super VGA because that's what
everyone is advertising ... interlaced or non-interlaced? ARGH!! What does
that mean? I need a VGA card, I knew that, 128K, 256K, or 512K!?! 'Cuse
me?? I thought I could only use 640K under DOS!! That doesn't leave much
room for programs! Huh? It's in protected memory not real memory?!? What
does that mean?? ARGHH!!

     Remember that every "must have" option is another couple of hundred
added to the final price...

     Mind you that you'd be *very* lucky to find a salesperson who
understands all this and even more fortunate if he or she is willing to
take the time to explain it all to you. Most vendors, even the reputable
ones, will try to sell you a "standard" bundled system where they make all
the decisions for you - bad move. You'll end of up a great system with
many little annoyances they didn't tell you about, things like screen
flicker, slow drive operation, etc.

     A color monitor with 1024 x 768 resolution may sound great - until
you realize that its an interlaced monitor and its flicker drives you up
the wall.   The price on that "special" 100-meg drive may sound good to be
true, and it is. When it arrives you discover the thing is a 5.25 inch
full height monster running at 40ms! This is much more common than you may
believe. I've seen NEC systems with four different types of hard drives
under the hood running anywhere from 19 to 50ms! If you don't ask ques-
tions about every component in your system there will be many nasty little
surprises waiting for you when your system arrives.

     I skipped all the no-name companies, I didn't feel like taking a risk
no matter what they said they'd give me "for free."   I'd read too many

horror stories about systems made from cheap parts, like motherboards that
flap in the wind and three year old 200ns memory chips no one else wanted.
I stayed with the big name companies that could afford the nice big ads in
magazines like PC Magazine, Byte, and PC World. Companies like Zeos,
Austin, Northgate, PC Brand, Sunnyvale Memories, to name a few. Then I
hunted down some reviews and started reading. Armed with semi-intelligent
questions, I started calling. Every vendor was very friendly and more
than willing to sell me a system, but one company impressed me a lot,
Northgate. Why? They answered the phone on the second ring and a human
was on the other end of the line. The human then spent the next half hour
answering every question I threw at him in gory detail.

    More than that, Northgate happily acknowledged that other companies
offered lower prices! They listed them for me by name and explained the
shortcuts they use to get those lower prices. The salesperson encouraged
me to call the others and told me the questions I should ask: what brands
of monitors do you use? What speed memory chips do you use and who is
your supplier? What rating did the FCC give your machine, etc. VERY
impressive! I called the other places and Northgate did seem to offer the
best designed system for the money. So I ordered a '386 with a NEC 2A
color Super VGA color monitor and two megs of RAM. Windows 3.0 and a
MicroSoft mouse were promised to me as soon as MicroSoft shipped them and
they arrived the week after MicroSoft publically announced availability.
Total price: $2,900, ouch!

    [Note: When I ordered the demand for the Slimline was so great that it
    was backordered two weeks. Every Northgate is also assembled by hand
    and burned in for 48-hours before shipping. Northgate's president was
    obviously concerned about the situation, he personally called EVERY
    customer ordering the Slimline and offered his apologies for the
    wait!]

                Ok, the Northgate plug is over.

    The system arrived and was easy to setup. The documentation was
typical - adequate, but hardly the easiest to follow. The entire
computer industry could use good tech writers with NO computer background
whatsoever, it would make life much easier!

                ......part 2 next week......

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                //////NEW ENGLAND ATARIFEST '90\\\\\\

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                              U*P*D*A*T*E

                              17-Aug-1990


Scheduled to attend:


Atari Corp.          In  the  personage  of  Bob  Brodie,  and  anyone (or
                     anything)  he  may  bring  along  with  him. Bob may be
                     hosting a seminar, or  at  least  one  of  his infamous
                     question-and-answer sessions.


BCS/Atari            The Boston  Computer Society's Atari Group will be
                     there, and why shouldn't they? Not only is  the BCS the
                     world's largest  computer interest  group, they're also
                     sponsoring this event.


Bit Bucket           The oldest  surviving Atari  dealer in Massachusetts,
                     with  locations  in  West  Newton  and Sudbury. The Bit
                     Bucket will have a  massive  booth  for  the AtariFest,
                     featuring software  and hardware.  The Bucket is also a
                     Roland authorized dealer, so don't be  surprised if the
                     booth has a strong musical bent to it.


Computer  Zone          A  dealer, from North Attleboro, MA. Bob will be
                     bringing a  wide  variety  of  software,  magazines and
                     other goodies.


Fast Technology      Jim  Allen, everyone's favorite jovial techie will be
                     there, fresh from his sojourn to  Germany. Turbo16s and
                     friendly  tech-talk  are  expected in abundance. Jim is
                     tentatively scheduled to host a seminar.  More  details
                     as they become available.


Granite  Computers   Hard  Drives  and  modems  for every occasion is the
                     specialty of this  company  from  out  neighbor  to the
                     north: New Hampshire (did you think I meant Canada?).


Gribnif  Software    Those "wild 'n crazy",  desktop  crusaders from Western
                     Mass. will be on hand, undoubtedly  with a  good supply
                     of NeoDesk 3: The Ultimate Desktop.


Chor-Ming Lung       The author of "Sheet", a  commercial-quality  shareware
                     spreadsheet. Sheet has been  called "The  most powerful
                     PD spreadsheet bar none" (ATARI ST USER magazine).


NAACC                "North Attleboro Atari Computer Club."   A  user  group
                     based in North Attleboro (you never  would have guessed
                     THAT, right?), MA.
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NaVAUS             "The Nashoba Valley Atari Users Society,"  a user group
                   from Massachusetts' Nashoba Valley (of course). Former-
                   ly known  as ABACUS (Acton-Boxboro Atari Computer Users
                   Society).


Nevin Shalit       ST INFORMER's  "Rumor City"  columnist will  be on hand
                   for   the  'Fest. Nevin  may  bring along copies of his
                   mail-merge/person-tracking  utility,  Tracker/ST. Nevin
                   is tentatively  scheduled to  host a seminar, either on
                   Color DTP with PageStream,  or on  Tracker/ST, or maybe
                   both!


SSAG               "South Shore Atari Group." A usergroup that began South
                   of Boston, but  whose  membership  has  since  grown to
                   represent virtually  the entire Greater Boston area, as
                   well as portions of the NORTH  Shore, and  Southern New
                   Hampshire.


Syntronics         The   "only" Atari dealer  physically located  in Boston
                   proper. John K. carries the  full  line,  and  is well-
                   versed in the musical aspects of the Atari Experience.


TidBit Software    Jeff Lomicka, author of The "GOOD Backup Utility", will
                   be on hand to  discuss, well,  "good" backup practices,
                   and I'm  sure he'll  be more  than happy  to show you a
                   certain utility  that makes  "good" backups practically
                   second nature.



     Things are  shaping up  nicely...I DO hope you'll be able to join us!
Remember the date:  October  27,  1990,  from  9:00am  to  4:00pm,  at the
University of  Massachusetts (Harbor  Campus), Boston.  See the previously
uploaded announcement (NEA_ANNC.ARC, file  #16141)  for  more  details, or
pursue the following options:

    GEnie:  Send E-mail to D.ANDERSON22 or check Cat 11 Topic 20 in the
            ST RoundTable.

    DELPHI: Send E-mail to DPJ or NORMAN238, or check the SSAG area on
            DELPHI/Boston.

    BCS/Atari BBS: (617) 396-4607. 300/1200/2400/9600 baud, 24 hours.

    Write to:  New England AtariFest '90
               c/o The Boston Computer Society
               One Center Plaza
               Boston, MA 02108
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                    WAACE AtariFest 90 update.....

     The following Vendors and Developers have committed to space in the
Sales area of the WAACE AtariFest....

                            Alpha Systems
                           Atari Corporation
                           Best Electronics
                        Branch Always (Canada)
                        Chuck Levin Music Store
                           Computer Digest
                            D.A. Brumleve
                     Debonair Diverse Data Products
                        Double Click Software
                     Frontier Software (United Kingdom)
                               GEnie
                              Goldleaf
                              ICD Inc.
                               Joppa
                         L & Y Electronics
                             SLICCware
                           ST Informer
                        Step Ahead Software
                          Strata Software
                          Toad Computers
                             Wizworks

Additional Developers will be at the show in the demo and seminar Rooms
This Vendors/Developers include...

                           ISD Marketing
                          Gribnif Software
                 ST Report Online Magazine (Ralph Mariano)
                       Current Notes (Joe Waters)

Seminars are scheduled as follows:

Saturday 1100   Double Click Software
         1200   Nathan Potechin Desktop Publishing with Calamus
         1300   Bob Brodie
         1400   Lauren Flanagan-Sellers
                   Everything you've Wanted to know about Wordflair and
                   Wordflair II
         1500   Rick Flashman & Dan Wilga Neodesk 3: The Ultimate Desktop
         1600   Ralph Mariano   ST Report Online Magazine
         1700   David Troy Mass Storage Devices

Sunday   1100   Joe Waters Introduction to Desktop Publishing
                   using Timeworks Publisher ST
         1200   D.A. Brumleve Kid Prgs
         1300   Atari Tech Person

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        1400    Darek Mihocka Software Acceleration
        1500    TBD
        1600    J. Wrotniak The Tools We Are Missing
        1700    IAAD The Independent Association of Atari
                Developers (IAAD) Meet the Public
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     In addition to the Seminar schedule Jim Pierson-Perry, Music/Midi
editor of Start Magazine will be in the Midi Demo room.

The banquet speaker will be Charles Johnson of Codehead Software. His
topic will be "Atari Through the Looking Glass"

                              See you at the Fest

                              Russ Brown WAACE Chairman

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> PIRACY SUX II STR Spotlightâ ¢   A reply....
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                      "PIRACY IN EL PASO"
                      ===================

A Reply

By Lloyd Pulley

I just finished reading Tim Holt's interesting article about piracy in El
Paso area. While I don't advocate piracy or pirate BBSes and while I have
no doubt that the pirate BBS that Tim reported does exist, I do question
some of the conclusions that Tim arrived at.   His logic reminds me very
much of Chicken Little's. Was it a piece of the sky or just a hunk of
wood that hit Tim in the head? Is piracy the cause of all of of Tim's
problems or are there other causes and piracy is just the one that hit
him on the head? Let's examine some of Tim's "pieces of the sky".....

1) "Jim and Tom at Jenkins' Computer Store feel that there have been
1,000 ST's sold in the El Paso area." - "In July, 1990, Jenkins' Computer
Store sold 10 Atari programs."

   But what wasn't said is how many of these 1,000 units are still being
used. Just 10 sales out of 1,000 customers does indeed sound bad but if

the ST's are only in use in only 100 homes, then the 10 sales isn't too bad.

How many of them belong to people that have moved out of the El Paso area? How many have been sold second-hand to people that wanted a second system for their homes? (People that have 2-5 ST's in their home only buy ONE piece of software to run on all their systems.) How many of them belong to people that shoved them into the closet. How many of them have been 'junked' and are just being used as spare parts? If El Paso is like the majority of the country, I would hazard a guess that there are only 400-500 homes that still have ST's in use...not the 1,000 originally sold.

2) "In July, 1990, Jenkins' Computer Store sold 10 Atari programs."
   a) "Jenkins' normally sells their software at full retail, but for a short period of time have offered a buy two and get one free."
   b) "....you see the $199 version of PageStream, 10 copies of Dragon's Lair, 15 copies of Space Ace, 2 copies of ChronoQuest II, Hammerfist... all sitting there, gathering dust, it becomes obvious what is going on."
   c) "I know you have been into Jenkins', looked at the selection, and said to yourself "Geesh, they have had that program sitting there for 2 years. Don't they get any NEW stuff?""

Let's take the last one first, it sounds as if Jenkins' has a wall full of old software. People get tired of seeing the same old, dusty software on the shelf week after week, these people are forced to start buying mail order so they can get the "latest and greatest" when it is first released and before it developes dust.

I wonder why Jenkins' still has all of these old copies of unsaleable software? Haven't they ever heard of stock balancing? Most reputable software wholesalers allow you to return unsold stock (within a certain time period) and give the dealer credit for them.

Yes, it is obvious what's going on. Jenkins' purchasing and sales policies are atrocious. When people can buy PageStream for $120-$140 from 20 different mail order houses (and probably get a newer version than the one that's been developing dust), why should they pay Jenkins' $199 (plus tax) for their old copy? Fifteen copies of Space Ace on hand shows that someone was a good sales person but it wasn't Jenkins'...it was their distributor.

I've got news for Jenkins', once you lose a customer, it's hard to get them back, even with a short time sale. Especially one that forces a customer to buy three pieces of software to get the discount. People who have forced into buying their software via mail order and getting 30-50% discounts on ONE piece just aren't going to be that impressed with a 33% discount (plus sales tax) and be forced to buy three programs.

Also, one thing that wasn't mentioned is that July and August are two of the worst months of the year for software sales...for any system.

3) There's little or no money in the new STE system.

Atari has never been known as a company where dealers make a high markup on their hardware. It has been that way since day one and hasn't changed since then. Atari dealers make their money on selling software and additional hardware. But if you have chased most of your customers into the mail order market, you don't even have that profit any longer.

4) Why would they stop repairing St's? Simple: NO MONEY IN IT.

   Huh??   Repairs are one of the few areas where a dealer can still make
money (see #3).   According to Tim, there is no other place in El Paso to
get ST's repaired and the next closest dealer is in Tucson.   My local
dealer keeps two full-time technicians busy, they are usually 4-14 days
behind on repairs.   This month his sales are down, on all the systems he
carries, but his repair technicians are still busy.   Why aren't these
1,000   customers, or even 400, coming to Jenkins' for their repairs?

Could it be they have found some way to pirate the repairs (Tim and
Jenkins' seem to want to blame the pirates for everything else)? I don't
think so. Or could it be that....

   a) There isn't 1,000 owners left in the El Paso area? Or even 400?
   b) Jenkins' repairs are too expensive?
   c) Jenkins' techs aren't reliable?
....I would lean towards the first option.

5) "The reason no one is buying is because the darn things are being
given away free on pirate BBS's around town."

   Really?   Is Tim saying that all 1,000 ST owners own modems and have
access to the pirate BBSes? Locally we've found that less than 50% of our
ST owners have modems. Oh I know, the 50% that have modems spread all of
the software to the ones that don't have one.   That would mean that 990
of the 1,000 ST owners in the El Paso area are "dyed in the wool" thieves
and are all interconnected. I find that one hard to believe.

   Tim seems to be blissfully ignorant of the fact that there were
probably MORE pirate ST BBSes around the country 2-4 years ago than there
are today.   But 2-4 years ago, dealers like Jenkins' were still selling
a lot of software to ST owners.   Tim implies that 99% of the ST owners
are pirating all of their software today, why wasn't the same percentage
pirating 2-4 years ago (did all of the honest ST owners sell their
systems to crooks)?

6) "Tom   and Jim can't figure out why the good customers from the past
aren't coming in anymore to buy programs."

   a) "Clones are the way to go. Go in, ask Tom how many IBM software
packages they sold last month. Then ask them how many ST packages they
sold. You will be shocked."

   b) "You start selling less and less Atari software. It only makes
sense. Start selling more and more IBM software, and IBM machines."

   As you take more and more of the store to sell clones, you give your
ST customers less and less reason to shop there. Now figure in that much
of your ST software is ancient, dusty and over-priced and you have
another reason why people are not shopping there.   Also, ask Tom and Jim
how many of their current clone customers used to be ST customers (I bet
they didn't subtract those users from the 1,000 figure).

   Tim says that Jenkins' is selling more IBM software than ST.   Why?

Don't they realize that for every ST pirate BBS, there are probably four
pirate IBM boards?   (I know of 4-5 pirate IBM boards here in Phoenix but
I have only heard a rumor of one ST pirate board.) If the ST owners are
not buying because they can get it free from pirate boards, why are the

clone owners buying their software?   They have more sources for "free"
software than the ST owners do.

I could continue but I think I've made my point.   It's easy to blame the
pirates for everything bad that's happened in the ST marketplace but if
you do, you're imitating Chicken Little.   While piracy is a problem for
all computer owners, no matter which brand, it is not THE problem in
the ST market.

Tim doesn't tell us how many ST systems that Jenkins' sold in the same
month when they only sold 10 ST software packages but I'd wager that the
number was very small.   Tim doesn't tell us that back when Jenkins' was
selling a lot of ST software, they were probably also selling 2-10 times
as many ST systems every month as they currently do. Tim doesn't tell us
that 80-90% of all software sales are made to new owners within 90 days
of the purchase of their system.   When there are no, or few, new owners,
there are few software sales (how many terminal programs or word
processors do _you_ need).   Tim doesn't tell us why there are more IBM
pirate boards around than ST boards but Jenkins' still seem to be able to
sell software for the IBM/clones.   Tim doesn't tell us that the _real_
problem is lack of sales, advertising and support from Atari.   I wonder
how many new pieces of ST software Tim has _bought_ (not given to him for
reviews, etc.) in the last year and how many did he buy the first year
that he owned his ST.

_____

> STReport CONFIDENTIALâ ¢   "BLOCKBUSTER ATARI NEWS FIRST!"
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- Moscow, USSR   RUSSIAN PROGRAMMERS TO TRANSLATE CPU DOCS

    A Moscow-based youth computer center Variant is willing to translate
computer docs to Russian for a small fee.   Dimitry Pashkov, Variant's
executive, expressed that "although other translation services are
available, they are not Russian or employ people who have no idea of what
a computer is, thus resulting in what looks like anything but software
documentation," he said.

- Sunnyvale Ca.   BRODIE - "ON THE ROAD AGAIN!"

    I will be in Houston, appearing at The Atari Safari '90 Swap Meet on
Saturday, Spetember 1, 1990. The Swap Meet will be held at the Quality
Inn, located at Southwest Freeway (59) and Weslayan.

For further information, please contact Bill Kithas, President of the
Houston Atari Computer Enthusiasts at 713-855-0815 (home) or 713-650-1994
(office).   Admission to the swap meet is FREE. User groups in the Houston
area are encouraged to attend and have a table for the swap meet. The swap
meet will run from 1:00PM-6:00PM.

- Moscow, USSR   INEXPENSIVE RUSSIAN-MADE ATARI SOFTWARE AVAILABLE

    According to Dimitry Pashkov, Variant, a youth computer center, has
written several programs for the Atari computer and translated a dozen
manuals into Russian for eager Atari users including disc interface,
Russian spreadsheet/text editor, graphics editor, electronic secretary and
games.   "We try to keep our prices for these products and services as low
as possible," Pashkov emphsized.

- Sunnyvale, Ca.   CERTAIN DEALERS ARE *ANGRY* ...WHY?

    A strange but very interesting story is circulating through the atari
community.   It goes like this, it seenms that B & C Computervisions and
San Jose Computer are getting the COLD SHOULDER from certain atarifest
representatives for having exhibited at the San Jose WOA show. We pur-
posely have not mentioned any names here but.. These two dealers will be
MORE THAN HAPPY to tell any interested party the whole story... give 'em
a call.

- Butte, Mo.   PHONEY FAX ORIGINS NOW KNOWN

    A number of rather concerned parties, including the staff at STReport,
have been actively investigating that "Phoney Fax" of a few weeks back.
It seems that the finger pointing of J. Townsend of Atari Corp. was total-
ly unwarranted and grossly irresposible. Townsend, in a message posted on
GEnie insinuated that the "fax" had been uttered by one of the online
magazines.   At this time, we believe its only right and proper to allow
time for the originator of the fax to come forward and offer an apology
for the crummy tactic. If such does not come to pass, then and only then
will the originator be identified by us along with our source of this
information.   And it would also be very proper for Atari's Townsend to
come forth with an apology for his having wrongly accused the online
magazines.

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           SGN1096   85Mb 24ms   3.5"   Y   649.00
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                     **** SIGN UP FEE WAIVED ****

           The system will now prompt you for your information.

     ****

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          "You can fool some of the people all of the time..
                            and
              all of the people some of the time...
                            but
              NEVER all of the people all of the time!"

                                       ....Honest Abe

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